

edition of his correspondence published under the auspices of Napoleon DDL Three volumes contain his memoirs and the *"Letters from the Cape"*, while the fourth discusses the campaigns of great soldiers. There was no intention of telling the whole story of his life, and the selections were governed by a transparent plan. No political apologia has had such a directly practical aim. The prisoner of Elba had regained his throne : might there not be a second resurrection ? Eagerly scanning the news of the royalist reaction in France, he determined to pose as the soldier of the Revolution, the standard-bearer of the ideas of 1789. When a deadly disease gripped him he worked no longer for himself but for his son. The kst and not the least of his triumphs was to create the Napoleonic legend, which in turn, with the aid of other influences and accidents, created the Second Empire. "The Bourbons will not remain," he declared a fortnight before his death; "my son will reach the throne." The King of Rome died a few years after his father, but a nephew stood ready to fill the gap.

The first of the three volumes describes the early exploits of Toulon, Italy, Egypt and Syria; the second brings the story through Brumaire to Marengo and the Concordat.

The narrator then jumps right over the Empire, returning to earth at Elba and ending with Waterloo. At first sight it seems curious that he should omit the glories of Austerlitz,

Jena and Friedland, and close on the note of catastrophic

defeat. But there is a method in the madness. Hoping that

Louis Xvm would be overthrown by the Left, he desired to

appear as its champion. While the Bourbons represented the

nobles and the priests, he had represented the masses. Re-

membering the Terror and the Directory, he had not wished

the people to seize power, but he had been a

popular ruler.
He found France in chaos: he gave her order
and glory,
nationality, religion and domestic peace. The
spirit, if not
the forms, of democracy had prevailed, for the
humblest
citizen could rise to the highest place. The
Hundred Days
symbolized the preference of France for a
Liberal Empire
over the *ancien regime*. Waterloo was an
unlucky accident,
due, not to the Emperor, but to the blunders of
Grouchy and
Ney. ^ In the conversations at St. Helena the
fallen ruler
occasionally admitted mistakes: in his dictated
apologia never*
The most brilliant of Napoleon's lieutenants
and one of
the most dazzling figures in French history left
memoirs
which have added little to his stature.
Talleyrand's decision